



Borough of Great Torrington

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

and the

Borough Surveyor and
Public Health Inspector

For the Year ending
31st December, 1963

Public Health Staff.

Medical Officer of Health:

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Glen Tor, Villa Road, Torrington.

Telephone 3222.

Public Health Inspector and Borough Surveyor:

P. F. R. E. SYMONS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Council Offices, 6, Halsdon Terrace, Torrington.

Telephone 2164.

Committees:

**HOUSING, SANITARY, BUILDING and
IMPROVEMENTS, SPECIAL SEWERAGE.**





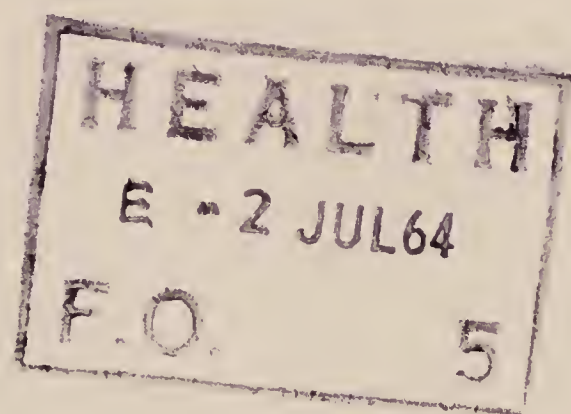
Borough of Great Torrington

S. J. PARKES, F.A.C.C.A., A.C.I.S.

TOWN CLERK AND
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER.

TELEPHONE 2164.

*Town Clerk's Office,
6, Halsdon Terrace,
Great Torrington,
N. Devon.*

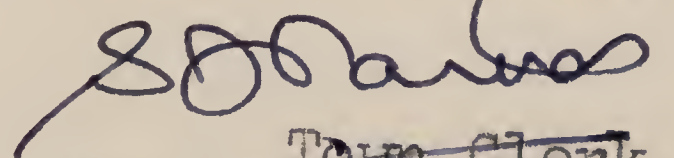


1st. July, 1964

Sir,

I enclose four copies of the Annual Report of the Medical
Officer of Health.

I am Sir,
Your obedient Servant,


Town Clerk.

The Secretary,
Ministry of Health,
Alexander Fleming House,
Elephant & Castle,
London S.E.1



Council Offices,
6, Halsdon Terrace,
Great Torrington.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

We have pleasure in presenting our report for the year ending 31st December, 1963.

The year was a healthy one for the Borough. There was no major epidemic.

The corrected birth rate was 15.0 per 1,000 population: that for the whole of England and Wales was 18.2—the highest since 1947.

The corrected death rate was 12.1 per 1,000 population: the figure for the whole of England and Wales was 12.2.

We are,

Yours faithfully,

C. F. R. BRIGGS,

Medical Officer of Health.

P. F. R. E. SYMONS,

Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

Borough of Great Torrington

1963

CHIEF INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS.

Agriculture.	Cattle Breeding Centre.
Glove Making.	Milk Factory.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (statute acres)	...	...	...	...	...	3,592
Mid-year Population (estimated)	...	...	...	...	...	2,860
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	...	1,022
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£89,043
Product of Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	£356 1s. 5 ₂ d.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS

Live Births					Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	16	16	32
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	2	2	4

Comparability factor for births—1.19

						England & Wales
Corrected birth rate per 1,000 population	15.0					18.2

Still Births					Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	—	—	—
Illegitimate	—	1	1

						England & Wales
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births	27.0					17.3

The total number of births which took place in the Borough was 29. Eighteen of these were in the Cottage Hospital, the maternity section of which was open only for the first four months of the year.



				Male	Female	Total
DEATHS	...	...	...	23	33	56

Comparability factor for deaths—0.62

					England & Wales
Corrected death rate per 1,000 population				12.1	12.2

Infant Mortality	Male	Female	Total
Deaths of infants under 1 year	—	—	—

					England & Wales
Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...		Nil.	20.9

(This was the lowest infant mortality rate ever recorded for England and Wales).

Maternal Mortality (including abortion)

There were no maternal deaths.

Causes of Death					Male	Female
Cancer of stomach	...	...	...		—	1
Cancer of lung	...	...	...		3	—
Cancer, other	...	...	...	...	1	1
Leukaemia	...	...	...	...	1	—
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	—	2
Vascular disease of nervous system			...		2	4
Coronary disease, angina		...	...		5	5
Other heart disease	...	...	...		3	9
Other circulatory disease		...	...		2	2
Influenza	...	...	...	...	1	—
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	—	2
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	1	1
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	1	—
Other disease	...	...	...	...	1	6
Accidents not involving motor vehicles	...				1	—
Suicide	...	...	...	...	1	—

Death Rates from Cancer

The death rates per million population for the year 1963 were as follows:-

					England & Wales
Cancer of lung	...	...	...	1,049	519
Other cancer	...	...	...	1,049	1,658

The sex difference in deaths from cancer of the lung in the whole of England and Wales was as follows (rates per million population):-

Male	Female
908	152

The hazards to health of smoking, and its established connection with the rising incidence of cancer of the lung, are brought to the notice of the public by posters displayed in doctors' surgeries and in prominent places in the town.

Age at Death Table

<i>Age at Death</i>							Male	Female
Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
1—4	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
5—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
15—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
25—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
45—54	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
55—64	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	4
65—74	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	6
75—84	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	17
85 and over	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	5
Average age at death	...	...	...	...	...	...	69	75

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There was no epidemic during the year. The very severe weather during the early part of the year seemed to have no adverse effect on the general health of the Borough.

The following cases of infectious disease were notified :—

Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...	22
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	15
Measles	...	...	...	...	3
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	1
Dysentery	...	...	...	...	1
Ophthalmia neonatorum	...	...	...	...	1

Poliomyelitis

Vaccination against poliomyelitis continues, either by injection or by using the oral vaccine. No case has occurred in Torrington for many years. In 1963 there was a further dramatic fall in the total number of cases of poliomyelitis notified in England and Wales.

Tuberculosis

No new case of tuberculosis was notified. The cases on the register at the end of the year were as follows:—

			Male	Female
Pulmonary	...	...	5	4
Non-pulmonary	...	...	3	—

The Mass Radiography Service visited Torrington early in July. Sessions were held at Torridge Vale Dairies and in the Town Hall. A total of 920 persons attended for X-Ray—557 male and 363 female. No new case of pulmonary tuberculosis was detected: one person was referred for further observation. A total of 8 persons were found with some non-tuberculous condition.

Venereal Disease

No case of venereal disease came to our notice. There are treatment clinics in Barnstaple.

CARE OF EXPECTANT MOTHERS.

Relaxation and mothercraft classes are held fortnightly, at the Church House, by the District Nurse/Midwife and the Health Visitor. Ante-natal care is given to expectant mothers by their doctors and by the District Nurse/Midwife in co-operation.

Milk (one pint a day), orange juice and other vitamins are available to expectant mothers at reduced cost.

DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY AND HOME NURSING.

The Queen's Institute District Nurse/Midwife is resident in Torrington, and has all the modern equipment necessary for the practice of midwifery and general nursing in the home. There were 11 domiciliary confinements during the year. Home helps are arranged as and when necessary.

CARE OF YOUNG CHILDREN.

The Child Welfare Clinic is held fortnightly, at the Church House, under the supervision of the County Health Visitor. Children up to the age of five years can attend the clinic.

CHIROPODY SERVICE.

The County Clinic is held once a month at the Church House. A charge of half-of-crown is made for treatment.

MEALS ON WHEELS.

A "Meals on Wheels" service was started in October, 1963. A midday meal is served twice a week. A charge of one shilling and sixpence is made. The number of persons availing themselves of this service varied between 14 and 20.

AMBULANCE SERVICE.

The County Ambulance is maintained by Heard's Garages, Torrington. It is operated by the British Red Cross Society. All ambulances are now equipped with two-way radio. In February 1963, North Devon Ambulance Control became centred in Barnstaple.

Patients carried in 1963	...	...	612
Total mileage ...	...	..	14,812

TORRINGTON COTTAGE HOSPITAL

Patients admitted during 1963	...	...	150
New out-patients	...	...	370
Total out-patient attendances	...	...	670
Maternity cases	...	...	18
X-Rays	...	...	46

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE.

On November 5th the South Western Division of the National Blood Transfusion Service came to Torrington, and 64 volunteers gave blood. This was fewer than in recent years; perhaps some found the date inconvenient. For some persons it was the second blood donation of the year.

SALE OF ICE CREAM.

All shops retailing ice cream are registered, and only pre-packed ice cream is sold. None is manufactured in the Borough.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961. Part I of the Act.

1—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	3	2	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	19	7	—	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	22	9	NIL	NIL

2—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H.M. Inspector	

Unreasonable temperature (S.3)...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)	...	...	...	...	...	...
(a) Insufficient	...	...	...	...	...	...
(b) Unsuitable or defective	...	...	...	...	...	...
(c) Not separate for sexes	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework)	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTAL	...	...	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

OUTWORK—(Sections 133 and 134). Part VIII of the Act.

Nature of Work	Section 133			Section 134		
	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 133 (1) (c) (2)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council (3)	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists (4)	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises (5)	Notices served (6)	Prosecutions (7)
(1)						
Wearing apparel, Making, etc.	156	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

RAINFALL.

Details of rainfall during recent years are as follows :—

	1963	1962	1961	1960
January ...	.92	6.50	6.03	4.03
February ...	1.53	1.37	3.22	3.46
March ...	4.29	2.92	0.40	2.14
April ...	4.00	2.95	4.18	3.10
May ...	1.48	2.01	1.18	1.60
June ...	2.45	0.48	0.76	1.25
July ...	2.56	1.64	2.92	5.77
August ...	4.95	3.08	3.54	4.63
September ...	2.62	3.11	3.83	5.35
October ...	1.73	1.19	7.65	7.54
November ...	9.80	2.50	2.82	7.42
December ...	1.25	2.32	4.11	6.93
Total ...	37.58	30.07	40.64	53.22

Rainfall figures are available for the years 1900 to date and this past year has been one of contrasts. January with 0.92 inches was the second driest January on record, whilst November with 9.80 inches was the wettest November on record.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The sewerage and sewage disposal systems in the Borough are good. Samples of effluent were taken regularly.

The enlargement and improvement of the sewage disposal works is in hand. The overloading of the works and consequent need for enlargement of the works was largely brought about by the increase in size and throughput of Torridge Vale Dairies (Devon) Ltd. The Company has not only fully co-operated with the Council but has agreed to pay the cost of that proportion of the improvements made necessary by the increased effluent from the Dairy.

WATER SUPPLY.

The water supply throughout the year has been very satisfactory.

Regular samples have been submitted for analysis. Twelve were taken during the year and all gave first class results.

The water is not plumbo-solvent and contains no deleterious substances. There are minute quantities of aluminium and manganese but it is otherwise free from metals.

In January the Council passed a resolution stating that they were in favour of the addition of fluoride to the water supply.

Of the total population of 2860 it is estimated that 2781 are supplied with mains water. 994 dwellings out of the total of 1022 are connected to the mains.

HOUSING.

Plans have been approved for the erection of ten flats in New Street. These flats are to be completely self-contained and are intended for elderly people. There will be one block of six and one block of four in two-storey construction. Eight will have one bedroom and two will have two bedrooms.

Detailed plans have been approved by the Council for the erection of twelve three-bedroomed houses, sixteen two-bedroomed flats and a detached house and shop on the site in Mill Street. It is hoped that work will start in the spring.

The Council continue to encourage house ownership by the granting of mortgages under the Housing and Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts. To date, the Council hold 99 such mortgages.

Since 1956 a total of 62 discretionary Improvement grants have been made and 34 standard grants have been made since 1959.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There are no common lodging houses in the Borough.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949.

A full time rodent control operator is employed jointly by the Torrington Rural District Council and the Borough Council. The joint scheme works very satisfactorily and very few serious infestations are found or reported.

INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Slaughtering has been carried out regularly at two slaughter-houses within the Borough and Tables A and B give details of animals slaughtered, meat condemned, etc.

TABLE A.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	<i>Cattle excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Number killed	243	1*	16	318	466
Number inspected ...	243	1	16	318	466
All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis					
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	1*	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	6	1*	—	5 (includes 1 "casualty")	25
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuber- culosis and Cysticercosis	2.47	100.0	NIL	1.57	5.36
Tuberculosis					
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	—	—	—	—	3
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	0.64
Cysticercosis					
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

* "Emergency" or "Casualty" cases.

TABLE B.

Summary of Meat condemned with cause and weight.

	<i>Part or Organ Condemned</i>	<i>Cause</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Cattle excluding Cows	3 whole and 2 part livers	Abscesses	41 lbs.
	1 part liver	Cirrhosis	3 lbs.
	1 set of lungs	Emphysema	8 lbs.
Cow	*1 liver	Abscesses	16 lbs.
Sheep and Lambs	*1 complete lamb's carcase and offal	Fevered and badly bled	36 lbs.
	*1 sheep's pluck	Abscesses	4 lbs.
	1 lamb's lungs	Abscesses	3 lbs.
	1 whole and 1 part liver	Distomatosis	3 lbs.
	1 part lamb's liver	Abscess	1 lb.
Pigs	3 heads	Tuberculosis	34 lbs.
	2 sets of lungs & hearts	Pneumonia and Pericarditis	7 lbs.
	4 sets of lungs	Pneumonia	9 lbs.
	1 set of lungs & heart	Abscesses	4 lbs.
	8 whole & 1 part liver	Cysts	27 lbs.
	5 whole & 2 part livers	Cirrhosis	18 lbs.
	1 kidney	Retention Cyst	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
	1 part groin	Bruising	2 lbs.

* "Emergency" or "Casualty" cases.

TABLE C.

Details of other foodstuffs condemned during the year.

Only two six pound tins of Corned Beef were condemned. The tins were blown and the meat putrefactive.

SUMMARY OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS MADE DURING THE YEAR.

Allotments and Fields	...	...	...	...	25
Byelaw and Planning Matters	...	...	...	...	61
Cattle and Pannier Markets	...	...	...	...	94
Cemetery and Churchyard	...	...	...	...	86
Drain Testing and Inspecting	...	...	...	...	33
Factories	...	...	...	...	9
Food Premises and Food Inspection	...	...	...	...	9
Housing	...	...	...	...	326
Improvement Grants	...	...	...	...	89
Meat Inspection	...	...	...	...	284
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	55
New Building Work	...	...	...	...	30
Nuisances (including obstructed drains)	...	...	...	...	31
Petroleum Licensing and Storage	...	...	...	...	3
Playing Field	...	...	...	...	15
Refuse Collection and Disposal	...	...	...	...	26
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	2
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal	...	...	...	...	230
Street Lighting	...	...	...	...	35
Water	...	...	...	...	15
Total					<u>1,491</u>



